1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
FL12 Masai FL12

is a man of wealth and importance he may be elected chief[1], in which case he is responsible for the discipline of the warriors and their appearance when summoned to fight, though he does not go to the wars himself. As with most East African tribes an elder's ideal of existence seems to be ease, not unmixed with drunkenness. Proverb No. 64 (p. 249), 'Don't lie with your feet against a post like the father of many sons,' meaning 'Don't give yourself airs,' is a vivid picture of the Masai pater familias taking his ease in the primitive posture of lying on his back with his feet against a post, while his family do all the work for him.

Masai women, unlike the men, are carefully dressed in leather garments, but a rare, and according to our ideas most unbecoming, custom forces them to shave their heads. Before marriage they are circumcised, and signalize their change of state by wearing large circular earrings and necklaces of brass and iron wire. Both girls and women have their legs and arms encased in iron ornaments, so that they can sometimes hardly walk.

This military organization of the Masai made them a most effective body for destructive military operations, and explains not only the predominant position which they acquired in East Africa, but also the respect which they inspired and the extent to which their customs were imitated by other tribes. On the other hand, it probably also is the reason why they never founded any state or polity analogous to the kingdoms of Uganda and Unyoro. The centre of political gravity was not with the elders or chiefs, but with a republic of young men, governed by ideas of military comradeship and desirous only of military glory. Retirement from this band of warriors as a chief was honourable, but seems to have been recognized as a removal to an inferior sphere of activity. The chiefs arranged the details of the raids which the warriors wished to undertake, but their power of compelling them to do anything which they did not wish was very slight.

The nearest approach to a central and superior authority among the Masai is the medicine man or Laibon (more correctly Ol-oiboni; see p. 324, &c.). They all belong to the Kidongi family of the Aiser clan, and are said to be descended from a personage called Ol-le-Mweiya, who came down from heaven and was found by the Aiser sitting on the top of Mount Ngong. This was nine generations ago, the genealogy having been preserved. The influence of the

[1] The chief is elected from the warriors, but leaves their ranks at once and becomes an elder.

1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
FL12 Masai FL12

574 Aimeri, nemejiñg eng-áji oo-'l-Kishumu, amu mme en-o-'l-poror lenye.

Kake eikilikwan, ajo: 'Kodee 'ng-ájijik oo-'l-Aimer?' Ore p' eitadual, nejiñg eng-aji nabo.

Ore pe ejiñg, nelnyóñto lido-openy eng-aji, nelo aiñguru 'n-giragat ti-se-wtji, neton el-

[837] omoni aboitare e-figurôyôni.

Araki ten esta el-openy eng-aji 'figurôyok kumok, nelo airagye, neiñgweki el-omoni inna-aji natijiñga meiraga.

Meidim el-tuñgani loo-'l-Maasai stômitiki el-omoni en-giragata, amu ôure, ten edak el-poror lenye, nâ.

instance, to the Aimer age, he must not enter the hut of one of the Kishumu age, as he does not belong to this age.

He will ask where the huts of the members of the Aimer age are, and when he has been shown them, he will enter one.

When he has entered, the owner of the hut leaves him and goes to search for a place to sleep in elsewhere, the stranger remaining with his wife[1].

Or if the owner of the hut has several wives, he goes to sleep with one of these, leaving the stranger in the hut he entered.

A Masai cannot refuse hospitality to a stranger (of his own age) for he is afraid that the other members of his age will curse him, and he will die.

233 181 'N-giahu[2], oo 'n-gujit, oo 'n-lla. Cattle, grass, and milk.

Enyor il-Maasai 'n-giahu nalañg; meitanyanyukye 'n-giahu se-tôki[3]. Esta 'n-giahu

[552] pôkin ing-arn enye anaa 'l-tuñganak.

Etii o-rorsi lenye ajo:

'Eriyore en-gitañg nabo el-

[556] lughunya o-'l-lee.'

Ejo, ten e-tum el-lee en-

The Masai love their cattle very much, and consider that nothing in the world is of equal value. As with people, each cow is known by name.

There is a saying which is as follows:

'One cow resembles a man's head.'

They mean by this that if a man

[1] *Vide* note 2, p. 312.

[2] The Masai cattle are of the humped Zebu type.

[3] Schweinfurth (*The Heart of Africa*, vol. i, p. 134) writes with regard to the Dinka and other Nilotic tribes: 'The poor savages . . . pay almost a divine homage to their cattle which they hold dearer than wife or child.' Kaufmann (*Schilderungen*, p. 101) adds that on the death of a cow a Dinka goes into mourning as he would if a relation had died.

136 113 191

1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
FL12 Masai FL12

gitsig nabo, pe eramat, neaku kumok, neitôpok ol-loo, amu eiyamishore, neiu 'n-gura, neaku ol-karsia te-inna-kitsig.

Ore en-dua oo-'n-giabu naa 'n-gujit; nenyor il-Maasae 'n-gujit, amu ninje en-daa oo-'n-giabu.

Ore tshili ten eany eng-ai eaka, nepwo 'Eguetyuk eaaniki 'n-gujit il-kilani pe etum aitasai eng-Ai.

Naa, ten dar ol-murani ol-aytini te-shoo, nesigeru ol-aytini 'n-gujit aaaiye, naa ten edai ol-murani 'n-gujit eibusigita ol-aytini, nemeittiki aar.

Ore aii ten tarure 'l-Maasae 'l-maligeti, p' eiytu neitayu e-sitwa, neitayu 'n-gujit sitaduaya.

Naa, ten erinyunye 'l-muran te-'n-jore, pe egilaki 'l-ootari-shite, neisilili, eibusigita in-dito eng-oti e-kulle napukurure 'n-gujit naanyori.

Naa, ten eiduri, neaniktini 'malasia in-gujit.

Naa, ten esaiyeki ol-tusigani 'n-gujit, nemeiruk e-saiyata, nêj: 'Ol-torrîbani illo, meiytie 'n-giabu.'

Naa, ten elo ol-tusigani wtji, pe edai ol-chani ôturaktue eng-

has a cow, which he looks after and tends, it bears, and by so doing enables him to live, for he can marry, and have children, and thus become rich. 233 181 [554]

Now cattle feed on grass, and the Masai love grass on this account. [824]

824

Whenever there is a drought, the women fasten grass on to their clothes, and go and offer up prayers to God. [782]

If a warrior beats a boy on the grazing ground, the boy tears up some grass, and when the warrior sees that the child has grass in his hand, he stops beating him.

Again, if the Masai fight with an enemy, and wish to make peace, they hold out some grass as a sign. [928]

Whenever warriors return from a raid, and it is desired to praise those who have killed some of the enemy, a girl takes a small gourd of milk, and having covered it with green grass, sprinkles it over them. [703]

Then, if people move from one kraal to another, they tie grass on to the gourds.

Should one man ask forgiveness of another with grass in his hand and his request be not attended to, it is said that the man who refuses to listen to his prayer is a Dorobo, and that he does not know about cattle. [627] [186]

Again, if a man who is proceeding on a journey sees a tree which has [484]

1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
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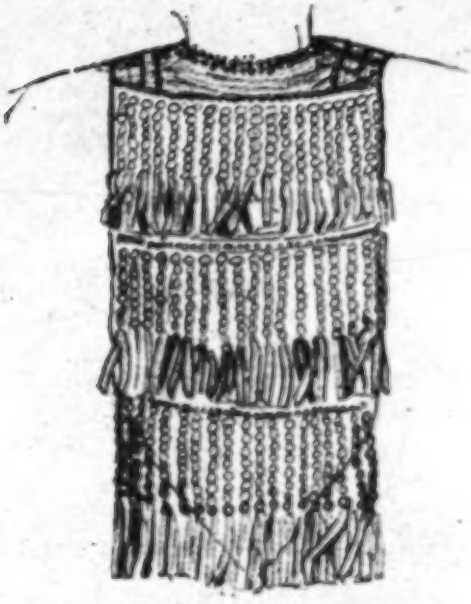
PLATE XX

531
301
292

1

2



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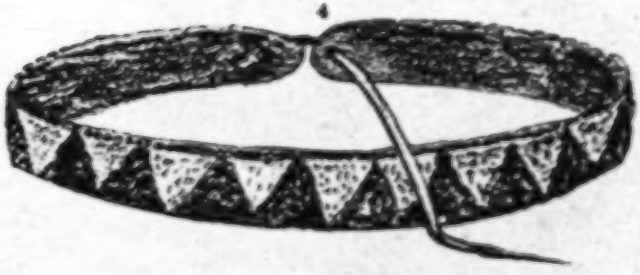

1. Necklace of brass wire, beads, and chains worn by women [¼].
2. N-derosi garment worn by warriors when proceeding on a raid after the election of an Ol-oundni chief [¼].
3. Ivory arm-ring worn by elders as a sign of wealth [¼].
4. Belt worn by unmarried women, made of leather covered with beads of different colours [¼].

[Facing P. 301]

1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
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Ore 'n-gulye-tōkitin náinoṣi.

Enyaal il-móruak oo 'ñgorōyok ol-kumbau áitushulaki e-makat o ol-kumbau loo-'l-muran. Netii 'l-oook too-'n-gumeshi ol-kumbau oidoñgo, nāji en-gisugi. Netii sii kulikae oook too-'l-mōtio.

Ēok sii 'l-muran, kake mēok pōkin. Menyaal ninje 'l-ayok araki 'n-doiye ol-kumbau, nemēok; etoni ake.

Metumil-Maasae ol-kumbau, amu meiyōlo aatuturu; kake einyañgu too-'l-meek, áinoeye eng-orno oo 'n-dare tasati.

Memiraki 'l-Maasae 'l-meek in-gíshu supati, 'n-gíshu olupin ake oo nemeata kulle, oo náiba 'l-asho, ninje ake emiraki 'l-meek, oo 'n-dare móruak oo 'n-dasati.

Nēok sii 'l-móruak in-aishi, neinyañgu 'l-maruan o en-joi too-'l-meek.

'N-gera ake náinoe en-aisho najon. Pōki en-dōki nainoe il-móruak te-'n-aisho najon il-changaro ake.

in gourds. Some drink it pure; others mix it with milk [1].

There are a few other things which the Masai eat.

Some old men and women chew tobacco mixed with salt and *Ocimum suave*, whilst others sniff ground tobacco up their nostrils: this latter is called snuff. Others again smoke pipes.

Those of the warriors who like it also take snuff. The boys and girls, however, neither take snuff nor chew tobacco [2].

The Masai do not grow tobacco themselves, for they do not know how to dig. They buy it from savages, exchanging it for butter and lean goats.

The Masai do not sell good cattle to the savages; they only give them barren cows, or those which have no milk, or which do not care for their calves. These and old or lean goats and sheep are the only animals they part with.

The old men drink honey-wine, and they purchase from the savages two kinds of beer, called Ol-marua and En-joi.

It is only the children who like wild honey: old men eat the comb full of grubs [3].

[1] This custom is also common among the Bari (Kaufmann, *Schilderungen*, p. 170).

[2] In olden days it was the privilege of rich old men and their chief wives only to take tobacco, which was called ol-chani loo-'ng-enyak, the eye-medicine.

[3] The Masai obtain their honey by following the *Cuculus indicator* bird.

13:Huntingford E-4 (no date) 1953 FL12 Masai FL12

chief; but in that year it was recognized that he was in fact no such thing, and the native administration was reconstructed with 14 Native Councils, one for each division (Il-Purko, Il-Damat, etc.), to replace the original council of the *ol-osho*. These Councils were composed of *il-aiguenak*, elders, and senior warriors; and the presidents of each formed a Central Masai Council which met twice a year. Under the Councils were 46 headmen, some of them *il-aiguenak*. The Reserve was divided into nine locations, the numbers of headmen varying according to the population of the locations. In 1930 these Councils were replaced by a Native Tribunal and an Appeal Tribunal in each of the two administrative districts, Narok and Kajiado, into which the Reserve was then divided. The headmen were divided into two grades, headmen (styled chiefs) and sub-headmen.

In Tanganyika, the laibon was at first regarded as the head of the Kisonko; but since this recognition proved unsatisfactory to the people themselves, a Masai Council was formed as Native Authority, consisting of headmen and elders, but possessing only advisory powers. Later, a local council was set up in each area with representatives of age-sets and clans on it; representatives of each local council sit on the Masai Council. There are 41 paid headmen.

Sources: Krapf, 1854; Thomson, 1885; Hollis, 1905; Merker, 1910; Whitehouse, 1933; Fosbrooke, 1948, and personal communication; Hailey, 1950.

MAIN CULTURAL FEATURES

Crafts

Housing

The Masai hut, *enk-aji*, pl. *ink-ajijik*, is a low structure with a flat or flattish roof. It is made of a framework of poles which are bent over and tied together. The interstices are filled with grass or brushwood, and the whole, including the top, is plastered over with mud and cow-dung. In wet weather hides are laid on top to keep out the rain. Huts are not isolated, but are grouped together in kraals. (See above, p. 107.) The huts of the agricultural Il-Tiamus have thatched roofs of the normal East African pattern (p. 111). A temporary skin hut called *ol-gobor* is used for a temporary halt where pasture is poor.

Dress and Ornaments (Traditional)

Warriors wear a small calf- or goat-skin cape tied over one shoulder, and a small back apron of skin fastened to the belt. Their battle-dress consists of a head-dress of ostrich feathers or of lion-skin, a cape of vultures' feathers, a cap made of a goat's bladder, a calf-skin garment, leg-ornaments of monkey-skin, and a piece of goat-skin fastened to the belt. The distinctive warrior's ornament is the horn arm-clamp called *e-rrap*, which has two points sticking upwards and is worn on the upper arm. Warriors also wear ear ornaments, necklaces, bracelets, and leg-bells. A type of garment called *es-toros* is worn by warriors on certain occasions: Hollis says when going on a raid after electing an *ol-aunoni* (*ol-otuno*); John Tombo ole Mbaei, when they go on a raid after making a vow to conquer or die. Elders wear skin garments fastened over one shoulder; rich elders wear ivory arm-rings. Boys wear a sheepskin.

Married women wear a skin cape and a skin skirt held in place by a broad belt. They wear coils of iron wire on the arms and legs, often on both the upper and lower arm, and from knee to ankle. All married women wear flat discs of coiled iron wire, *i-suratia*, hung by straps from the ear-lobes (like the Nandi *tsoh*), and some wear wide collars made of coiled iron wire which stand out round the neck, and are about 6 or 8 ins. wide. They also wear a profusion of necklaces and neck ornaments. Girls wear skin garments tied at the shoulder and fastened round the waist with a belt. They also wear coils of iron wire on the arms and legs, and necklaces.

361 /26 cont./
417 are separated from one another by thorn barricades, and the huts
35 are often protected from damage by the cattle by means of thorny
824 branches placed around them.
233

One distinguishes between kraals for the married (eŋg aŋ el moruak) and such for the warriors (ol manjata). In the former live
621 the married men (ol moruo, el moruak) with their families, in the
361 latter the warriors (ol moráni, el móran) with their mothers and the half-grown, uncircumcised girls /27/ (en dito, n doje). One sometimes also finds several kraals built together into one. The author found a village that consisted of five kraals built next to one another, three of which were El moruo kraals. A dense thorn-barricade extended around the entire kraal complex.

595
[556] The married man on the average has five to six wives, wealthy men have in addition also a few secondary wives to whom they
[736] are not legally married. The secondary wives are made up of widows who may not marry again or who have not remarried and

342
417
291

Merker phot.

Ill. 8. Small pen beside the hut.

/45 cont./

583 not alone, however, but with the support of a friend. The honey pot is hung on a horizontal pole, one of them grasping each end. It is not the weight of the pot that makes this method of carrying necessary, but an ancient custom, about whose meaning I have discovered
• [556] nothing. Wealthy people often also pay up to four cows more than usual, which is then regarded as the highest price that may be demanded. Beauties, as well as daughters of distinguished people, that is, of wealthy and influential people, often stand above the
[587] average price. The price for childless widows and for childless, divorced women is the same as for young girls. for a widow who bore daughters, on the other hand, only a male and a female head of cattle are paid. In order that her father does not receive bride price twice, however, he gives back from the first one as much as the second one amounts to. For the second, third, etc. wife, just as much is paid as for the first. If the bride price is in part deferred for the bridegroom, the woman nevertheless passes into his possession provisionally, and likewise the children born before the final settlement of the bride price belong to him. If, however, he then ab-
[586] solutely refuses to pay the rest, the father-in-law or the mother-in-law has the right to take back the daughter with her children in exchange for the return of what has already been paid. The cattle paid as bride price must be plain black or white. With the payment
[606] of the bride price, the bride withdraws from her family. In /46/ some lineages, however, there still prevails a -- so it seems -- formerly general custom, according to which the father-in-law does not lose the right to interfere in the domestic relations of the young couple until the son-in-law has further given him a bull. The relatives of the bridegroom need not contribute the payment of the bride price, but usually do it if it is necessary. The bride does not get a dowry, just as the bridegroom does not receive a gift from his parents or parents-in-law. If one of the betrothed dies before the
583 marriage or dissolves the betrothal, the portion of the bride price
586 that was paid is returned. If the husband turns the wife out or the marriage remains fruitless, this has no influence on the bride price paid, while a possible remainder not yet paid remains unpaid. On the other hand, if a childless woman leaves her husband, the

/73 cont./

561 634 [791] [787] After he has counted off the little stones of his oracle game for a while, he decides that N., the son of M., is to become ol aunoni. This session is secret, and the speakers also have a duty to keep its result secret for the time being. A man can only become ol [554] aunoni who is distinguished by physical beauty, faultless build, strength, and health. After the speakers have returned home again to their area, they call together all the ol borõr members there and, with these, again set out for the ol oiboni. Then a very large hut (os siñgira otunigi) is built there. When it is finished, the speakers take a number of warriors into their confidence and tell them who has been named ol aunoni. Then all gather in the hut, in the center of which stands a new, neatly carved wooden stool, toward which the one named is inconspicuously pushed by those who know. As soon [301] as this has been accomplished, a few of those standing around him [291] push him down onto the stool, others place a string of blue ring-beads (ñ gonoñgo) around his neck, tie the spiral ear ornament made of copper wire (e surudia), such as is worn by old men and women, into his ear lobes, remove his short, skin-apron (e megiti) of the warrior, and in its place drape around him the long one of the married (the ol gela l ol moruak). Finally all those present cheer the new ol aunoni and cry out tadarawá jo ijõk eñ gischon, that is, remain poor, [556] bring us luck. The Masai in general maintain that every ol aunoni has remained poor; if he were to put livestock in his kraal, he would soon die, his wives would bear him few children, wealth would remain [431] denied him. But he does not need it, for every man under him is obliged to give to the ol aunoni visiting him a fat ox and milk. Hence he is constantly on visiting trips, which explains why he has neither a large stock of cattle nor numerous progeny. In his kraal the lord who keeps the women at work is missing, and the latter in turn indeed have no incentive to work, for, by means of the gifts that fall to their husband, an excess of foodstuffs always prevails.

[574] [721] After the ol aunoni festival is over, the other ol borõr members wander back home and celebrate a long meat feast (ol bul), whereupon they /74/ usually set out on a war expedition, while the ol aunoni himself goes back to his kraal and remains there.

[Warrior Kraal]

/87 cont./

701 554 [714] [534] fighting, large leg bells (el duallan kitwa), the tinkling of which in the latter instance serves to prevent a going astray by the individual warriors and a scattering of the troops. Where the bell sounds is a rallying point.

A special position is also occupied by the ñ gămininí = benefactors. [556] They are warriors who, themselves generous, also have a generous, well-to-do father. From him they often receive oxen for slaughtering and then distribute the meat among their comrades and all strangers, without distinction as to age and sex. If such a benefactor is wounded in battle or if he suffers an injury elsewhere on the march or at home, the others are concerned about him and compete with one another to help him to the best of their ability.

701 703 577 Accordingly, miserliness is sharply condemned, and a miserly warrior or one who has miserly parents is treated badly and, in case of illness or wounding on the way, is not infrequently left to lie helpless.

701 578 [554] Speaker and leader live like other warriors and are not surrounded by any special ceremonial. Off duty they are treated with respect, which is shown especially by the fact that people avoid coming too close to their girls or lightly seizing an excuse for a quarrel with them. Among the other warriors these two things almost daily lead to serious disputes and often enough to dueling, in which the opponents go after each other with sword and club, but only very rarely [683] wound each other seriously. If this should happen sometime, in a few districts the wounded one receives from the victor a fine con- [431] sisting of livestock; in other districts, only if a bone is broken. In general immediately after the duel /88/ sometimes only after the healing of the wound, reconciliation follows, the formality of which consists of the mutual exchange of sandal thongs and sometimes also 701 the exchange of the skin cape (e megiti). The matter becomes more 578 serious if one is killed in a duel. First the father of the victor is then 682 condemned to pay a larger number of cattle. If he hands them over, the affair is settled. If he refuses them, however, the friends of the man killed attack his kraal and rob him of his entire herd. But they have scarcely brought them home before the friends of the one robbed also try to rescue them again. This goes on until they have become tired

/217 cont./

681 Unknown in penal law are: an aggravated death penalty, for example, death by fire, the principle of an eye for an eye, the view that the perpetrator must pay with the body part with which he has sinned, as well as symbolism, inprisonment, enslavement, a public monetary fine besides the composition, public monetary fines in general, a right of pardon.

683 599 There still remains to be pointed out one penal decree, which, however, exists only for warriors. That the calling and way of life of the warriors, who are impressed primarily by brute strength and force, are not suitable for preventing rowdiness is obvious and is shown by the frequent, more or less rough brawls among them. Insofar as they seem useful for promoting personal courage, they are not punished; for those connected with bodily injury what was said above applies. For the brawls a stick or a club is used as a weapon and the shield for display. In order to force the opponent to leave himself open, one directs a blow on the left lower arm holding the shield, and, to be sure, not infrequently so violently that it is shattered. Now, if a warrior has already inflicted broken bones on the opponent several times, especially in the manner just described, all the warriors, under the leadership of their ol aigwenani, gather together and announce to him that he will be outlawed if he once more /218/ engages in a brawl; if the one warned violates this prohibition, every warrior of the kraal is justified in killing him.

692 561 •[556] [628] The legal proceedings are the same in civil and penal cases; in both there is only one court for the people of a district. For the warriors this is the speaker (ol aigwenani); for the older married men an older, respected, i.e., wealthy, man chosen each time by the persons concerned to settle the particular case presented. In controversial matters between warriors of different kraals or, which is usually the same thing, of different areas, the speakers concerned jointly confer and decide, either alone or, if they do not reach a definite decision, with the advice of an ol aunoni, whose voice is then decisive. In disputes among married men of different areas a mixed council of elders decides. The ol oiboni may be regarded as a court of review, who, however, is called upon only in those 692 cases which concern the commonweal. There are civil proceedings

21:Huxley Q, T-5 (no date) 1960 FL11 Luo
Masai FL12

numbering about 85,000; keep about one million head of scrub cattle, and 660,000 sheep and goats. They *could* export fat steers and lambs, but have done next to nothing to improve the quality of their animals. This is because they do not need the cash. There are old men living in mud hovels with little but ear-rings, a spear and a blanket who could at any minute realize several thousand pounds for their cattle. Scarcely one of them could not afford a motor-car if he wanted one, probably a Jaguar at that. The plain fact is they do not want motor-cars, or beds, or kitchen sinks, or radios, or refrigerators, or washing machines: they just want cattle, which they have, and which the processes of nature will increase for them without their having to do any disagreeable work.

It is an *impasse*. The whole machinery of modern society, modern trade, modern development, has been halted by the Masai's refusal to keep up with the Jones's, or the Kamaus in this case. It is like a great Britannia aircraft grounded by a midge in the works. Modern civilization runs on avarice as cars on petrol, and if there is no pump where you can fill up with avarice, you simply stay where you are.

But even the Masai are not really free of avarice: it merely takes a different form. If they do not want bicycles and trousers, they do want more cattle, and this has led them into a great error. Instead of rejecting everything the West offered them, they accepted the hypodermic syringe of the vets. First of all the vets put an end to rinderpest, and then, rather less successfully, dealt with various other diseases that were keeping their herds in check.

No doubt it would have needed superhuman self-denial on the part of the Masai to have rejected this magical means of ending the periodic epidemics that had wiped out all but a rump of their cherished herds. Yet these were the means by which nature had kept herds and habitat in balance. Vegetation, controlled by constant factors like rainfall and soil structure, cannot multiply as creatures of the animal kingdom can, and do. The fact remains that to accept the vet's syringe was fatal to the Masai, and to offer it to them, as the Government did, without also insisting upon some means of keeping down the livestock population, was an act of remarkable